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To the Brothers in Colgate

who were and are and shall be

Yours in Colgate

Arthur J. Thomas, '10

MATER

AVE atque VALE

by

Arthur Thomas

HAMILTON, N. Y.

REPUBLICAN PRESS

1916

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.H554M3
1916

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By The Republican Press
Hamilton, N. Y.

$1.00

NOV 27 1916

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no 1

To the Hesitating Purchaser:

Rating

Good Sirs, here be Measures—
Both Reason and Rime,
To liven your leisures,
To pleasure your time.

As quoted, our verse is
Still rising in gold,
And frequently worse is
Complacently sold.

But, wisely, to save your
Incurring declines,
We margined some gravure
To cover the lines.

Good Sirs, give them credence;
Quotations are strong.
Come, test them in cadence,
Come, try them in song.

Poems

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DO you know our Campus at Colgate? Grey,
tree-embowered turrets that make
Pale umbers and pearls in the silvers that
shimmer on Colgate Lake.
And our prices are low in Colgate—low
even for things as these—
For the attar of Omar's roses and
the Pillars of Pericles.

"The angels of Heaven might glide through her gardens,
Their glorious pinions unconscious of stain."

Hamilton

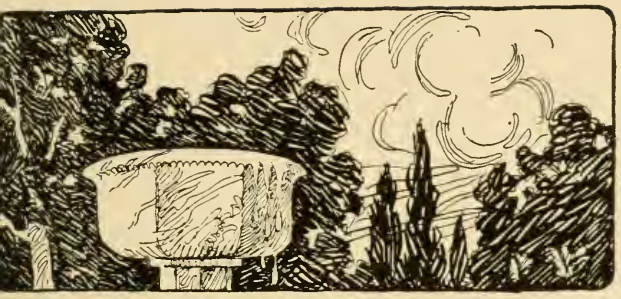
I know a village, I know a village,
Tangled with trees in a complicate skein.
The angels of Heaven might glide through her gardens,
Their glorious pinions unconscious of stain.
I know a village, I know a village,
Cinctured of hills on an undulate plain.
I know a village, sweet Hamilton village
Whose murmuring arches the maples sustain.

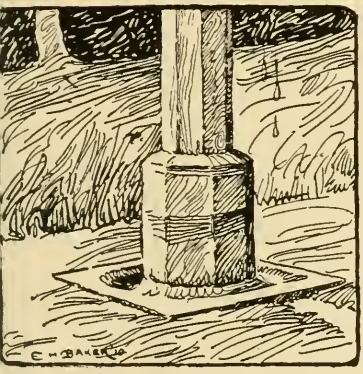
O sky-scraping city, earth-burrowing city
Whose white feet are stayed at the gates of the main,
Thanks for the blisses thy maidens have brought me,
Thy limbs are as lilies where Cupid has lain.
But I know a village, a country-sweet village
Whose footsteps have turned from the ways that are vain:
A pure-hearted village, I think of Judea,
The white hands of angels her footsteps maintain.

Deep canyon-cut city, clear-aureoled city
Whose nights are more white than the meteor's train,
I love the allurements thy women have wrought me,
Thy lips are as scarlet—a chalice to drain.
But I think of a village, an evening-husht village,
Red-broidered by clover that runs in the plain,
And I long for that village, sweet Hamilton village
Whose footsteps have turned from the things that are vain.

For I know a village, a summer-sweet village,
Deep-tangled with trees in a complicate skein.
The angels of Heaven might glide through her gardens,
Their glorious pinions unconscious of stain.
I know a village, a clover-claspt village,
Encircled of hills in an undulate plain.
I know a village, sweet Hamilton village,
Whose murmuring arches the maples sustain.

"O, sky-scraping city, earth-burrowing city
Whose white feet are stayed at the gates of the main."





The College Fountain

Rise to eastward, rise to westward
Classic halls to guard thee so,—
Therebetween a pathway granting
Curving access to and fro.—
Campus-slopes before and after,
Undulous, like billows slow;
And within the gravel-closure,
Bended like a crescent-bow,
Stands a marble, urnlike fountain
All in crystal overflow,
Stands memorial and reminder
Of the times called "Long Ago":
And beneath the bubbling basin,
And the basin-shaft below,
All in uncouth Grecian letters
Twists a motto, running so:
Running *ὀρθούμεθα βουλῇ*
With the date of long ago.
Still the marble margin sparkles
Like the white of driven snow,
And the crystal beads are dropping
Still in flashing overflow,
Binding thus, with chains of diamonds,
Present scenes to "Long Ago".

"Green behind it waves the forest
And the carpet-grass is green"

A Poet's Grave

In the calm Chenango valley,
(Never valley spread more fair)
On the greenest of its hillsides
Is a spot we count most rare,
Worthy of the Grecian Muses
For a poet slumbers there.

Green behind it waves the forest
And the carpet-grass is green;
To the northward, maple-shaded,
Is a quiet village seen,
And a stately college campus
Gracefully descends between.

Chiseled shapes of gleaming marble
From the waving sward arise,
Faithful fingers pointing upward
To the over-smiling skies,
Where the soul-freed, hillside-sleepers
Walk the vales of Paradise.

And beside a massive marble,
Central in that gleaming throng,
(Vocal pinetrees over-sweep it
With soft murmurs, season-long,)
Sleeps a singer of sweet music,
Rests a fashioner of song.

May it be the sighing wind-harps
  When the breezes fresher blow?
May it be the rippling grave-grass
  Bending, singing, to and fro?
Nay, it is forgotten music
  From the Isles of "Long Ago".

May it be some loved one calling
  Who in "Dulce Domum" waits?
Some "Sheaf"-laden harvest-worker
Shouting backward to his mates?
Nay, it is an angel-vesper
  Scarcely heard "Between the Gates."

Thus the hillside sings incessant,
  And the vocal things around,
Praises of our own loved Poet
  Whom the waiting world has crowned
As a maker of sweet measures,
  As a master of sweet sound.

"To the northward, maple-shaded,
Is a quiet village seen."

Das Hamilton-Thal

Tief in dem blauen Thale
  Beshattet liegt die Stadt.
Weisz glänzt die Alma Mater,
  Die uns gepfleget hat.

Kein Dorf, mich dünkt, ist schöner;
  Kein Thal so anmutsvoll.
Kennst du die Hügelreihen?
  Die Ulmen kennst du – wohl?

The Lake on the Campus

* * * the light of Heaven varies, now
At sunrise, now at sunset, now by night
With moon and trembling stars * * *Tennyson.*

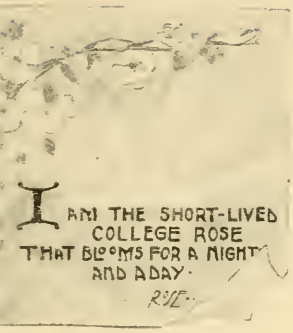
Thou art an opal ranging
To the deeps of sapphire-blue,
In a golden sunray-setting
All the burning daylight through.

Thou art a magic mirror
When twilight shadows play;
Thy pearly depths inverting
The forms we know by day.

Thou art a jasper pavement
In star-mosaics laid,
When o'er thy evening-beauty
Has fallen deeper shade.

* * * * * * *

Thou art a lucent jewel
On Colgate's rolling breast.
And of thy changing beauties
We know not which is best.



Philosophy—Of the Prom Girl

Old are the college walls—so old;
  Romance is older than they.
Metal and mortar will crumble and rust;
  Love is a Youth alway.

Fast are the flying hours, too fast,
  In the dances whirled away;
I am the short-lived college rose
  That blooms for a night and a day.

Gone are the ancient glories—gone;
  Thebes is a heap of clay.
I am the short-lived college rose;
  Love is a Youth alway.

"Gone are the ancient glories—gone;
Thebes is a heap of clay."

The Law of Colgate

This is the law of thy Mother, and ever she makes it sure;
Saying, 'Only the clean shall enter, and only the real shall endure'.

I am the Mother who beckons, I am the Mother who calls,
Seated in tranquil beauty, circled by sapphire walls.
Poiseful I rest on my hillsides as the sea-fronting temples of Greece,
In my vales are the ways of pleasantness, and my paths are the paths of peace.
Wide and deep are my borders, my line has gone out through the lands,
The mountains have claimed me for Mother, the valleys have touched my hands;
And I call to the lands that know me, to the cities that feel my power
For the sons who shall strive for my blessing and it will not be won in an hour.

Send me your manly and earnest, send me your genuine ones,
Them will I love as a Mother, them will I make my sons,
Them will I clasp to my bosom, feeding them warm at my breast,
Blessing them with my blessing and truly they shall be blest—

With poise and with power and with patience, with depth and resources of soul,
Them will I dower with my vision, to see not in part but in whole.

But the sham and the snob and the slothful, the litter and foam of the street—
Lo, I cast them back from my portals. I trample them under my feet.
I harry them sore in my combats, I laugh them to scorn in my halls.
Their baseness I burn in my acids, I spurn them from under my walls.

But my tried and my tested and chosen, my proven and genuine ones
Shall rise up to call me blessed, shall circle their Mother with sons.
Them will I mould as a metal, them will I temper again,
And the sons of the sons of my children shall find me the Mother of men.
I am the Mother who listens, I am the Mother who waits,
And the sons of the sons of my children have clamored before my gates.
This is the law of thy Mother—, Lo, I have made it plain,
That only the pure shall prosper, and only the real remain.

A Coincidence

(The "Old Grad" Muses.)

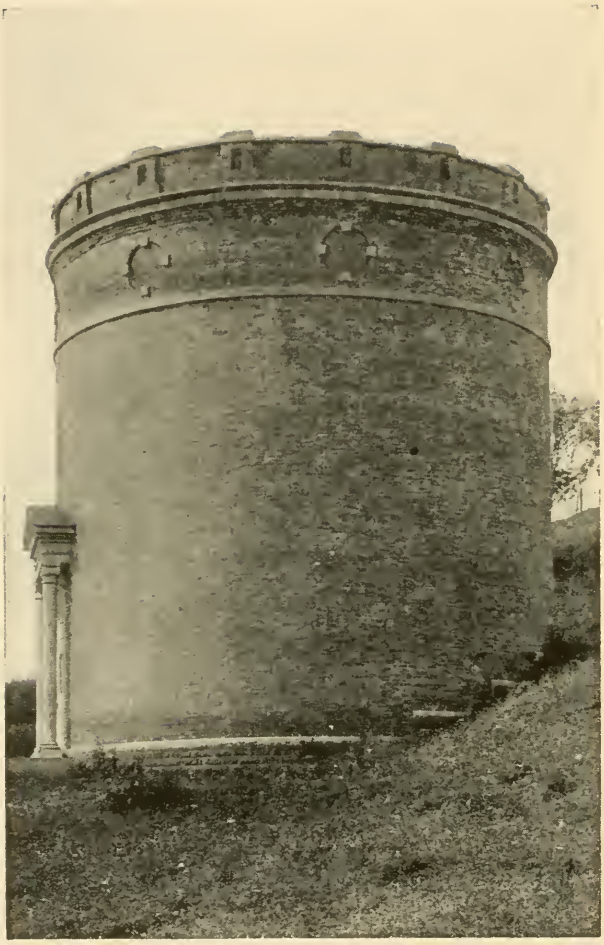
RED roses and my first love (I scarce was seventeen)
And ne'er did orient ivory bear up so much a queen!
I ordered red, red roses, and yet their carmine flame
Against her crimson kisses was put, I thought, to shame.
I ordered from the city (some twenty miles away)
And at the High School Banquet that night was none more gay,
For in the whirling dances it pleased us all should see
The fateful, crimson rosebud that she had given me.
Her cheeks were like twin roses, her silky hair was jet.
"Ne'er, ne'er to be forgotten!" and "never to forget!"
I scarce recall one whisper of all our wild lips said,—
I wonder if she's married—I hope she is not dead.
Red roses and my boy-love! Ah, how the years have flown,
I cannot tell her first name, so many I have known!

Dark pansies and my next love; the tide was rising strong:
She came to me on Prom nights with music and with song.
I purchased purple pansies, and yet their royal dyes
Were pale against the azure that deepened in her eyes.
Waltz music poured upon us—it stirred the rising blood—
I bore her through the eddies of that melodious flood.
Her breasts were like two lilies, her hair was golden bands—
It gave the thrill of sunlight under my ardent hands.

"Forever and forever!" "Forever and for aye!"
(Whence come the vast "forevers" that lovers give away?)
Her gold-and-purple beauty, how could a man forget?
(I have an old address book might give her full name yet.)
Those Veilchen made me thoughtful (for Pater's check was slow)—
They say her son's in Colgate. I really do not know.
Dark pansies and my youth-love! And ah, the years between,
I would not know her face now, so many I have seen!

* * * * * * * *

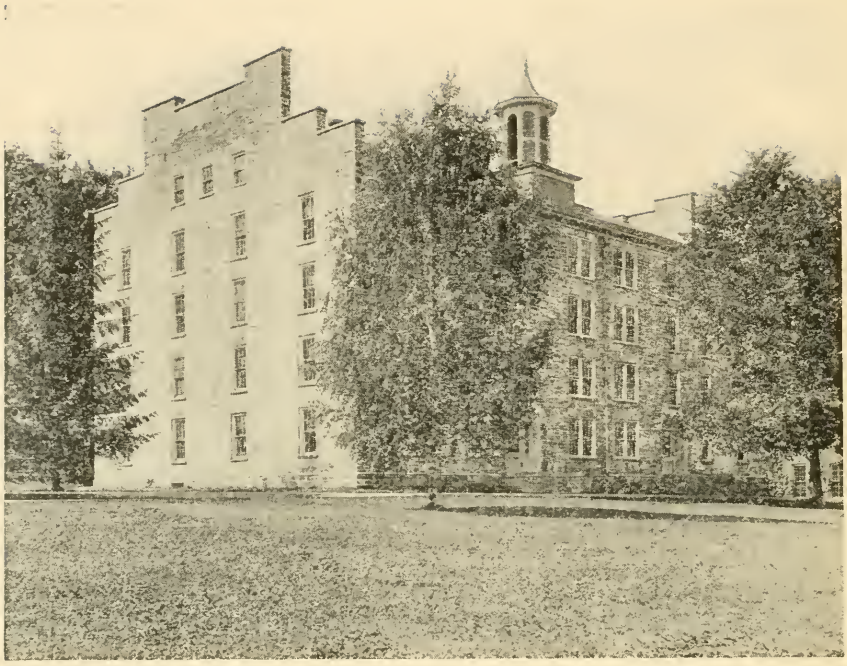
My wife trains crimson roses to stain our garden wall,
My daughter clusters pansies where shadows deepest fall.
(Red roses and dark pansies! How many loves there be
Immortalized in rose-jars that breathe of Araby.)
But vanished roses' beauty steals o'er me, if at all,
When tangled in the sweetness of those against the wall.
Old loves are gone forever, if loves they were, that came.
My daughter's eyes are darker than any flower ye name;
Her mother's lips are carmine, no rose is half so fair,
But when the smoke-rings waver above my evening chair
I sometimes wonder, wonder, if cunning fate — — who knows?
(My daughter's eyes are azure, her lips are dashed with rose.)



"On the hills my foot is sure"

Water Tower

Here I stand,
Regnant o'er surrounding land.
Arteries hid my conduits are,
Pulsing from my heart afar
Where the crystal fluid slips
To the waiting goblet's lips.
On the lawns my steps are light
As the dews that fall at night—
Needful trouble of the rain,
Made to go and come again.
Mine is magic ever new;
Only once the Prophet drew
From the rock-surrounded springs
Streams for thirsty murmurings.
On the hills my foot is sure:
Vale be steadfast and secure!
Town, that Phoenix-like did burn
Only fairer to return,
Nevermore may Daemon-Fire
At thy waiting walls aspire,
For my silver wand doth know
Spell at once to lay him low.



West College

This is the time-honored story the Ancient Stones repeat,
What time, in the Hour of Shadows, the College Buildings meet.

"Where the sleeping billows broaden
To a land-locked long repose
I was lone; then slow about me
Fairer, later Halls arose,
Standing brotherlike together
In a verdant campus-close.

Weight of four score weary winters
Has oppressed with ice and snow
And the shafts of eighty summers
Have assailed with fiery glow;
Smiting winds from every quarter
Have essayed to lay me low.

Ah, those days! The days departed!
Oft I held the festive throng,
While the jest rose high within me
And the laugh was loud and long;
Now I hear the insects shrilling
And the night-birds' even-song.

And my old men doting, dreaming,
View the past through gilded haze;
Orbed full-perfect, reappearing,
Seem their far-off college days,
And how fallen seems the present
Upon strange, untutored ways!

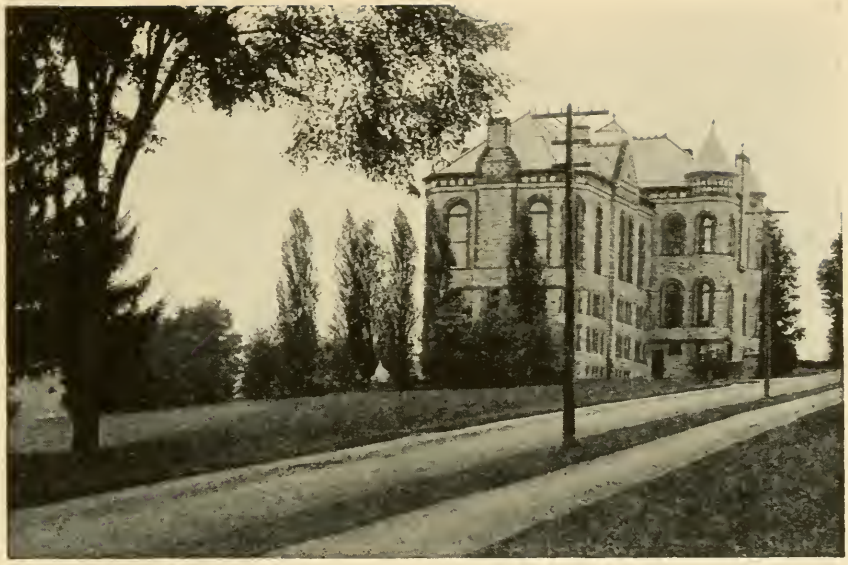
* * * * * * * *

Hold! A deeper vision flashes,
As upon the ancient seers:
Change I shall but shall not vanish,
Nor is any cause for fears,
For my life is reincarnate,
New-transmuted down the years.

And my young men shall see visions,
Mirage-gleaming bright before,
Where their names and deeds go sounding
Down the world forevermore.
May they find some green oasis,
Ere the journey be quite o'er!"

This is the venerable story the Ancient Walls impart.
And the younger Pillars listen, though they know the tale by heart.

"Standing brotherlike together
In a verdant campus-close."



The Library

(The Mother of Learning Speaks)

I would not force red-blooded men who throng
The gym, the campus and athletic field
To take the treasures that my shelves can yield
In science, art, philosophy, and song.
Team-trained, sport-hardened, sons I would, made strong
For times of test, deep-chested and nerve-steeled;
But not in Kadesh by a fountain sealed
(Its worth unguessed) shall you remain too long.

Untrained by me, *untrained*, a man departs;
My pulse is beating with the tide of things
That from the bosom of the ages springs;
I am your Mother's heart—her heart of hearts.
You shall not pass from me to Promised Lands
Till spring-compelling rods be in your hands.

"My pulse is beating with the tide of things
That from the bosom of the ages springs."

Farbenspiel

Color-mad festival!
  Riot of rose!
Free for the best of all!
  Chassez! Repose!

Thongs interplaited
  Trellised on high.
Banners serrated
  Hanging hard by.

Deep-throated laughter!
  Colgate in song!
Feasting! and after
  "Shake" and "So long!"

Banqueting over!
  Spectrum-hued rain,
Falling to cover
  Partings that pain.

Pelting and parting!
  On with the fun!
Lest the tear starting
  Chances to run!

Color-spouts whirling
  Orange-hued mist!
Snow-spirals swirling
  Stains amethyst!

Rainbows, earth-stranded,
  Bracing the beams!
Tints iris-banded
  Flowing in streams!

Ribbons no duller
  Staining the woof!
Cloud-bursts of color
  Sweeping the roof!

Purples from polar
  Regions of night!
Crimsons from solar
  Seven-hued light!

Prussian and cinnabar,
  Lilac and green,
Iridesce in a bar
  Bronze-damascene!

Pelting and parting!
  Chassez! Repose!
All homeward starting
  Color-of-rose!

The Willow Path

"Near the lake where drooped the willow
Long time ago—" —*George Pope Morris.*

On my walls are many pictures artist-friends have made for me;
There, my castles crown Saint Lawrence, there, Bermuda sits at sea,
Here, my own immortal Como holds the light of Italy.

Look on this frame, hanging nearer. So; the depth is better seen.
'Tis a long perspective gliding under glimmering walls of green,
Hasting back as if for hiding, and slant willows overlean.

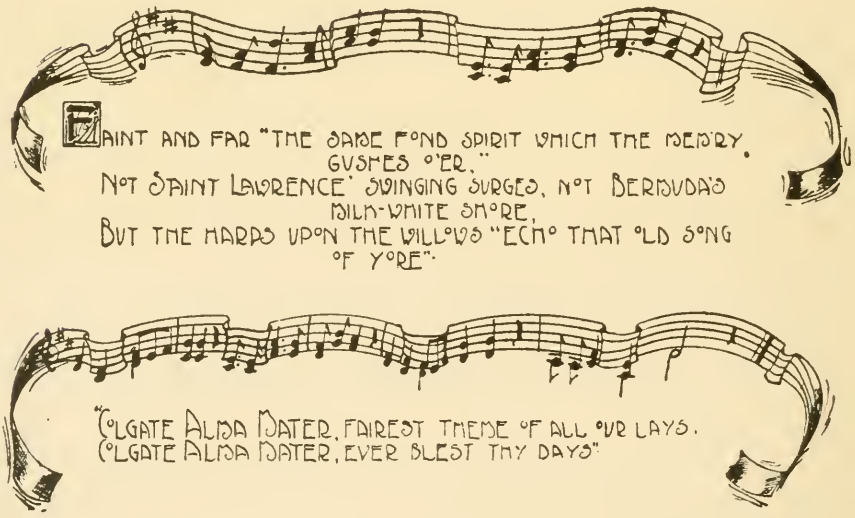
From that arch a gay procession makes as if 't would issue soon,
But it never yet has issued for the light is less than noon,
And the spring tide's rising glory is not rounded yet to June.

Still those willow patterns quiver, still those amber branches sway
Over waters gliding ever down a babbling, silver way,
Where the rosy light is morning and the May is always May.

Many kingdoms, thus, and climates, gleam upon my
study wall;
There, the Courts of Karnak crumble, here, the ruddy
apples fall,
And the Pathway of the Willows is the fairest of them
all.

* * * * *

In the dewy hush of evening, when the clover-blooms
grow strong,
Oft I hear the lilt of music, catch the echo of a song
Rolling down these rolling hillsides, in those valleys
sounding long.


Faint and far "the same fond spirit which the memory
gushes o'er,"
Not Saint Lawrence' swinging surges, not Bermuda's
milk-white shore,
But the harps upon the willows "echo that old song
of yore".
"Colgate Alma Mater, fairest theme of all our lays,
Colgate Alma Mater, ever blest thy days"

* * * * *

Near my desk hang pleasing pictures artist-friends have
made for me;
There, the *campanillas* tinkle, there, floats Venice
veined of sea,
But the picture fairest, nearest, is a willow tracery.

"Tis a long perspective gliding under glimmering walls of green."

"Toward thy pleasant halls and stately, oft the student foot was slow."

Mater Ave Atque Vale

Mater ave atque vale, let us bless thee ere we go—
Tenderest of loving Mothers in the daisies and the snow.
O'er thy flowery campus-closes now the winds of summer blow
And thy silvery mirror shimmers through the waving green below.
Toward thy pleasant Halls and stately, oft our laggard feet were slow;
We have sipped, not drunk, the fountains from thy deep-welled heart that flow,
Gathered but a leaf of learning where the trees of knowledge grow—
(Haply 'tis a deeper wisdom if we know we do not know.)
Through thy gates a constant river, Youth's true Fount, shall flash and flow,—
Noisy, foaming as it enters, leaving deepened, and more slow.
Colgate, Mother, thou hast calmed us, let us bless thee ere we go.

Blessed be thy pillared porches, though the student foot be slow;
Blessed be thy jewelled mirror, waving, gleaming, there below;
Blessed be thy fields of summer where the gold-eyed daisies grow;
And thy days of winter blessed with the storm-clouds and the snow.
Colgate, Mother, thou hast reared us, thine the only arm we know.
Mater ave atque vale; thou hast blessed us. Let us go.

MERCURIUS

A Lay of Modern Rome

Sung at the feasts

of

MERCURY

The same being

A

Mosaic

from

Macaulay

Herald, Hail! Mercurius!
Hail snake-twined Caduceus!

Mercurius

Herald, Hail! Mercurius!
Hail snake-twined Caduceus!

I

To-night the walls and windows
  Are hung with banners all,
And a band of lusty brothers
  Will keep the outer hall.
While flows Chenango's river,
  While stands our College Hill,
The banquets of Mercurius
  Shall have such honor still.

II

Ye men of Even Numbers,
  With stalwart hearts and true,
Who stand by bold Mercurius
  That still has stood by you,
Come, hush the circle round me,
  And list my tale with care
Of what our Hero once hath borne,
  And what he yet may bear.
No Syracusan fable
  Of Colgate's "wavering line",
No tale of Orange banners
  And men that root like swine,
Though by my Alma Mater
  It is a goodly sight
To see the hated Orange
  Swept down the tide of flight;
To see her warriors scattered
  Like boats with broken sails,

When raves Lake Onondaga
  Beneath the northern gales,
When Syracusan score-marks
  Have met their wonted doom,
And the sea of Orange banners
  Is veiled in inky gloom;
But on our very Campus
  These stirring deeds took place,
In midnights dark when none might mark
  His hand before his face.

III

Since first the great Mercurius
  Of mortal eye was seen,
Have years gone by two decades
  Four units and thirteen.
Whence came the great Olympian
  To keep this happy feast
But few can say and no one may,
  Whether from west or east.

* * * * *

IV

Sylvanius Deceptimus
  Within the city's wall
Hath met by fate a maiden
  Like a red rose and tall;
Hath met by chance a damsel
  Like a white rose and red,
And what Sylvanius told her
  It needs not now be said,
For men that warm to football
  In loving wax not cold:
Wherefore Love's ways have altered not
  Since the brave days of old.
Men *say* he saw her nightly,
  When none beside might see,

And that her words were in his ears
Which none might hear but he;
And while she plied her house-craft,
In a sweet voice and low
She sang the sweet old ballads
And loves loved long ago.
So wooed he, and so sang she,
Until the knot was fast,
And toward Sylvania's mountains
The bridal party passed.

V

Sylvanius Deceptimus
By the Nine Gods he swore
That the valley of Chenango
Should art-less be no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a testing day,
When artists north and artists south
Might summon their array.
The bronzes and near-bronzes
Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place,
Form many a fruitful plain;
And many a chosen artist,
The greatest of the land,
Hath put before Deceptimus
The cunning of his hand,
But with one voice the judges
Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Mercurius,
Go, Messenger of Heaven!
Go, shed thy deathless beauty
O'er wild Chenango's foam,
And sing Sylvanius' praises
From Nineveh to Rome!"

VI

I wis, in all the College,
There was no heart so cold,
But warm it throbbed and fast it beat
When that good news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Elders,
Up rose the Young Men all
And hastened swift to place the gift
Beside the western wall.
They took the brazen image,
And set it up on high,
And here he stands before you
To witness if I lie.

VII

Not without secret trouble
May I pursue the tale,
(O, Mighty Herald, spare me,
But truth must still prevail!)
For plainly and more plainly,
Along his godlike back,
Now might ye see the metal (?)
Begin to peel and crack;
And plainly and more plainly,
From head piece down to heel,
His crafty, skin-deep beauty
Was seen to crack and peel.
The bronze that peels and crackles,—
Too nude thereof to speak,—
So kindly those who dwelt on high
Soon gave unto the Greek
The nearest-needed garments,
That in less brazen guise
The naïve, scabby Herald
In open air might rise:

And likewise tints of Tyre,
In lead and oil ground,
Upon his manly muscles
In many coats were found.

VIII

Long, long, it were to follow,
And little were the need,
The glorious narrations
Of many a manful deed,
And many a Line of Labors
Whereon our Hero fell;
The Even Numbers *know* them,
There is no need to tell.
Behold they stand in writing
Upon thy Mother's scroll,—
Go ponder well its meaning,
Go read aright the roll.

* * * * *

IX

Our purple valley knew him,
And spread her careful loam,
That in her breast the God might rest
Whose wont it is to roam.
Now, o'er his place of slumber,
Are farms and pastures seen,
And rows of corn and fields of wheat
And apple-orchards green;
The plowshare runs its furrow;
The farmer wields his hoe;
Little he thinks on those fleet limbs
That mouldered once below.
Little he knows how sternly
The roar of battle rose,
Like the roar of a burning forest,
When a strong north wind blows;

How thick the maimed lay scattered
Under Albania's height;
How through the gates of Utica
Raved the wild stream of flight;
And how good Father Mohawk
Bubbled with crimson foam,
What time the Wrong-Sized Numbers
Beset the walls of Rome.

X

But, Comrade, when thou sittest
Before the banquet gay,
Think thou with heed upon the deed
Of many a vanished day;
So shalt thou kiss his toe-nail,
If aught remain of toe,
For sandals, wings and serpents
Have vanished long ago.
Thus to the great Mercurius
Vow thou thy vows and pray
That he, in banquet and in fight,
May keep his *head* alway.
Back comes the class in triumph,
Which in the festal hour,
Hath kept the God Mercurius
Full safely in their power.
Ye men of Odd-Sized Numbers,
We bid you bide in fear,
What time the God's own Herald
Would seek ambrosial cheer,
But if ye still be stubborn
To work our Idol wrong,
The Even Numbers warn you,
Look that your bones be strong.

* * * * *

XI

All hail to Mother Colgate!
  Let the Long Call be given!
Hail to the Hill that stands for aye,
  And the Messenger of Heaven!
The foe shall rise against thee
  In the City of the Salt;
More wise, perchance, her warriors were
  To ponder and to halt,
Ere on her trampled banners
  Rest the good Colgate heel,
And wriggling in the dust she lie,
  Like a worm beneath the wheel.
Hurrah for the brave warriors
  That round our Mother stand!
Hurrah for Colgate Spirit,
  And a stout Colgate hand!

XII

So when the months returning
  Bring back the days of fight,
The banquets of Mercurius,
  Marked evermore in white,
Unto the great Olympian
  Let all the brothers throng
With music and with laughter,
  With feasting and with song,
And let the walls and windows
  Be hung with banners all,
Let not a brother hasten
  To catch the *Cannon Ball*,
But worship Winged Mercurius
  Of the great Olympian line,
Who reigns on Colgate's Campus
  With the scepter serpentine;

For still his name sounds stirring
Far o'er Oneida's foam,
And like a blast, his fame has passed
From Utica to Rome.
And in the years ensuing
Oft shall the tale be told,
How well we kept our Idol
In the brave days of old.

Notes

It is said that "the art of leaving off" is a very charming and a very rare one. An Ancient People have long won honorable mention by their consistent use of this art—this "naught in overplus." "The art of leaving out" is even rarer and more charming—saving situations by the thing we do not do. And so with notes; for, like words to the wise, they are usually superfluous.

Intelligibility, as well as emotion, should dwell in the tents of poetry; and it is perhaps not too much to expect poems of place and incident to shadow forth some glimmering of the affairs they profess to celebrate.

Edmund Vance Cooke dedicates his "Impertinent Poems" "to whomever may like them." We believe these poems will be intelligible to whomever may read them. But the Obvious is frequently explained.

Written as they are around the Colgate theme, the strength and life of these poems is the strength and life and glory that is Colgate. But it is possible that some who do not know Colgate intimately may, by the turn of circumstance, grant this small book a bit of time. Let us be pleased to fancy it. And to those, our friends of tangent, if not concentric, interests we mention the tradition or custom of Colgate upon which a poem hinges, when the allusion is not of itself evident.

———

THE COLLEGE FOUNTAIN

One of the rare beauties of Hamilton, our sister college to the north, consists in the numerous memorials which literally dot her campus. It is a field of memories. Here a tablet, there a sundial, farther on some god in fleeing marble—all set in the wavy plush of the campus grass and framed in borders of elms that were very old before most of us were young. And each memorial is a fortress of the memory for some class, a physical symbol of their permanent psychical connection with their Alma Mater.

We admire Hamilton. We do not envy her. Our memorials are "fewer,—scattered stars", and therefore, do we cherish each the

more, but may Heaven and class spirit, class spirit looking to the coming years somewhat and its own numeral less,—may these, and all good fortune, multiply the memorials on our campus for like Milton's sonnets thay are "alas, too few!"

The memorial which the little piece celebrates is the fountain set up by the Class of 1872 between West College and Alumni Hall. Several interesting letters have been received by the writer from members of that class concerning the fountain. It appears that the legend cut upon the stone, *ὀρθούμεθα βουλῇ*, was their class motto, "We prosper by council" meaning, we think, that first they assured themselves they were right and then went ahead.

Would that the poetry,

> "And the crystal beads are dropping
> Still in flashing overflow"

were truth also, but it is only after the summer showers that the birds now bathe in the hollowed marble. Like the water in the Dormouse's well, the water in the fountain is "well in." Why may not the campus-winds that wave the maples "wave the slender jet of water" as they did of yore? Here is a fountain that is not a fountain, for the crystal soul of the water has left it. The golden bowl is not broken. Is it, then, the wheel at the cistern? Our sweet poet who sleeps on the nearest hillside sang of inevitable imperfections—

> "There's a harp unswept and a lute without strings,
> There are broken vows and pieces of rings."

But is our Fountain inevitably interrupted?

———

"TO CATCH THE CANNON BALL"

The "Cannon Ball" is a mixed train (number 68) on the Utica division of the New York, Ontario and Western, leaving Utica at 11:15 P. M., for Norwich and scheduled to arrive in Hamilton at 1:10 A. M. It is *said* to be a matter of record that on one occasion it did arrive at that hour.

The *accommodation* coach is wedged between grinding freight cars; feeble oil lamps shed a faint radiance and strong odor over the sleepy forms. It is Utica for the night, or this—likewise for the night. Number 68 is the "last infirmity of noble minds." Several

excellent trains pass over the division. This is a *popular* train. Though wholly elective, number 68 is "taken" regularly by all Colgate men.

———

A POET'S GRAVE

Benjamin F. Taylor was born in Lowville, Lewis County, N. Y., July 19, 1819, graduated from Madison University in 1838, died in Cleveland, Ohio, February 24, 1887, and was buried in the College plot at Hamilton.

He is without doubt the greatest poet and the most charming essayist that Colgate has yet produced. By the London Times he was styled the Oliver Goldsmith of America. Take him from the shelf and let him speak to you a moment—and you are his forever—every essay has a delightful turn, every poem some inevitable and haunting phrase. Let Homer nod while Taylor sings to you what Colgate and the Northland was.

The allusions throughout the poem are to the titles of separate poems and to complete volumes of his work.

———

WATER TOWER

"Town that Phoenix-like did burn"—an allusion to the great fire of Hamilton which occurred on the evening of Tuesday, February 19, 1895. The business portion of the village was almost entirely destroyed. By one of the ironies of Fate the present excellent water system which would have done much toward saving the village lacked but very little of completion.

———

WEST COLLEGE

The period in the life of West College of which this piece is supposed to give a glimpse is about the year 1910.

Excellent histories of the early days of Madison University are available and from them we quote—particularly from the article prepared by Prof. Ralph Wilmer Thomas for the 1899 History of Madison County, N. Y., by John E. Smith.

"Under the name of the 'Baptist Edication Society of the State of New York', a charter was obtained from the Legislature, March 5,

1819. On the 3d of November, 1819, a committee of the society decided that the institution should be located at Hamilton."

* * * *

"For nineteen years the institution was purely a ministerial school, admitting only those who wished to enter the ministry and had been approved by their respective churches. The students soon began to come in such numbers as to tax severely the limited resources of the young institution. A larger building was occupied in 1823, but this soon proved too small, and the authorities began to look for a permanent home for 'The School of the Prophets.' On March 11, 1826, Deacon Samuel Payne gave his farm to the society and here was erected in 1827 the 'Western Edifice' now known as West College. The school continued to grow, and in 1833, the 'Eastern Edifice' was built—now known as East College. In 1838 a large boarding hall was erected on the plain below the hill, and between 1835 and 1838 three houses for professors had been added to the property of the instutution."

It is with special pleasure that we quote from the delightful "Alumni Reminiscences" by Dr. Newton Lloyd Andrews published in the Salmagundi of 1908:

"The University buildings were then, [1858], the Western Edifice, the Eastern Edifice, and the Cottage Edifice. This last was a one-story stone structure on ground a little to the east of the north end of our present Alumni Hall." * * * * * *

"West College was a dormitory, except the top floor. That for the most part was the chapel, though the western end was divided into three class-rooms." * * * * * * * *

"The central part of the present top-story of West College was not then floored over. The four sides of the chapel surrounded and looked down upon 'the pit', which was on a level with the third floor. This smaller enclosure had students' rooms opening out of it, which were under the sides and ends of the top-floor. The pit had fixed benches, and was often used for students' meetings. Box-stoves in two corners of it served to heat the whole chapel." * * *

"The pit was nice to slip into, when one was too late to take his seat with his class above, and yet wanted to answer 'chapel' to the daily roll-call. Those making chapel thus could not be easily seen from the Faculty-settees. It is a pity the old chapel does not survive in a picture! The organ and choir were at the east end,

opposite the Faculty, on the top-floor beyond the pit. On the north side sat the Academes, in front of the choir were the Freshmen and Sophomores, while the benches of the south side accommodated Juniors, Seniors, and Theologues." * * * * * *

"Shall the University Boarding-Hall escape recollection? Would that it might! Happily I did not board there long. To 'eat one's way through it' from Junior Academe to Senior Theologue was to risk the loss of good digestion and good manners". * *

"But what of the fellows themselves? They were a good lot. For brains and for character there has been no higher average, though even then there was talk of the 'palmy days'." * *

"The evening after the Commencement of '61, at the 'Conference of Alumni and Friends', which meant then what Alumni Dinner speeches mean now, profuse commendation of the class just graduated found its climax in the question 'Shall we ever see its equal?' A voice from the gallery (let me now acknowledge it was mine) replied 'Yes! next year.' "

Another charming sketch of West College by Albert Perry Brigham appears in the same number of the Salmagundi—a portion to this effect—"But there were tall daisies growing in the grass, save when in June the janitor husbanded a brief time from selling old furniture to the boys and swept the meadow with his annual destruction. With firm hand he removed the ash heaps, the professors painted their front steps, and Commencement was here.

"President Dodge put on his white, tall hat, the horses were hitched about the campus and all the graduates, to the last man, spoke in the vast spaces now cut up into comfortables corners on the top floor of Alumni Hall. There were Valedictories, and classical, and philosophical orations, orations of the 'first class,' and some poor fellows had the humble joy of speaking only 'orations.'

"But notwithstanding ash heaps and other primitive things, the Hill was not so bad a place after all. There was a quarry to declaim in, the bits of beech and hemlock woods were venerable even then, and Dart's Orchard was not far away. The college graveyard was under the upper woods and there were hallowed places on the gentle slope, as there are more today. More than all, East and West Colleges were brimming with men,—they were not five story monuments of damp and darkness, but full of plain fellows who did much work, and had a good time." * * * * * * * *

"There was a college bell in those days,—may Heaven bless the time, and punish the vandal who stole the precious relic, and send us a friend to rear a noble chime of bells to tell again in noble tones to answering hills, the story of the college.

"Doleful as it is today, the sanctuary of the campus will never be other than West College. Stoves, whitewash, cold floors, coal bins and all, it is our choice bit of antiquity, foursquare, solid, and full of memory."

After these "good old days", though just how far after "in calendar months and days" we cannot state, the college life ebbed slowly away from the Hill. The men lived and had their being in the Fraternity Houses and in private rooms about the village. Only here and there—and rarely at that—was the room of student found along the teetering floors.

In the winter of 1909-10 came news that the old building was to be renewed. After chapel on the morning when this news was announced the whole student body and faculty marched in file, singing and shouting, through all the stories of old West College. The old stairways trembled threateningly under the hilarious feet.

West College is reincarnated indeed. Pleasantly and conveniently appointed, it is again rightfully a center of Colgate life. The vision of the stones has become a reality, "new-transmuted down the years."

———

FARBENSPIEL

Commencement Week closes with the Alumni Dinner and the Alumni Dinner closes with a confetti battle. The banquet is held in the Gymnasium, gaily decorated with the banners of many colleges. An oval gallery surrounds the main floor of the building. From side to side and end to end of this gallery is strung a series of taut cords, suspending, thus, above the heads of the banqueters a vast net, the meshes of which are about two feet square ("thongs interplaited, trellised on high").

As he enters the banquet hall, each man is given a generous supply of confetti and coils of colored paper ribbon—preparedness should extend to carnivals.

Ultimately the speeches *are* finished. A wavering instant—and the hall is a mass of color and motion. Thousands of the brilliant streamers shoot up, catch on the meshes of the net and tangle among the struggling forms. It rains and hails and snows confetti. It is color-weather. You have been caught in summer thunder-showers when "it came down in sheets"; this is very like, and you take a fierce hand in the general cyclone. The orchestra is playing fast music, the crowd is surging, refluent,—pushing toward the doors.

* * * * * *

For weeks your pockets and the cuffs of your trousers yield bright-colored bits of paper.

———

MERCURIUS

All Colgate men know how much Mercury signifies in the college life. No better note could be found to accompany this parody than the "Life History of Mercury" appearing in the Colgate Madisonensis of December 19, 1914, and with the kind consent of the Madisonensis management we append practically the whole article.

This riming history of Mercury is written by a man of the even classes, without malice, but with no apologies. However, lest us say that if in some far off (and suppositional) Olympiad, by some mischance, Mercury might *temporarily* be a guest of the Odd Numbers, the poem by a slight legerdemain would still apply. Change "odd-sized" to "even" and vice versa and the poem still fits like a sandal. We suggest these mental reservations, even in the present work, to the reluctant purchaser of the "odd-sized" years. At all events he will want the drawing of Mercury done from life. We hereby thank Mercury for the favor of sitting and for many favors gone before.

LIFE HISTORY OF "MERCURY"

———

ORIGIN OF THE CUSTOM. INTERESTING EVENTS IN CAREER OF FAMOUS "BIRD".

"They say that if you go back far enough you will always find a woman in the case. Tracing the history of the now sacred god Mercury back to original sources, we find that such proved to be the fact in this time-honored college tradition. Had it not been for a

certain fair daughter of Eve who resided in Hamilton in the late 70's, Mercury and all it means would probably have never become such an important factor in Colgate life. It all came about in this wise.

A wealthy, public-spirited gentleman from Pittsburg, Pa., becoming enamored of an attractive damsel in Hamilton, N. Y., in his frequent visits to that village noted and bemoaned the sad lack of decorative statuary. Desiring to remedy this defect, he magnanimously offered to present the town with a life-size, bronze statue of a Continental soldier, on condition that it should provide the pedestal. His offer being accepted, the statue was soon in its appointed place, being unveiled with due ceremony by Dr. Sylvester Burnham of the Seminary.

Elated with the success of this venture, the generous manufacturer made a similar offer to the class of 1879, then Seniors, suggesting a bronze statue of the god Mercury. This kind offer was also accepted and soon the god was duly installed at the head of college hill, between Alumni and West Halls. Thus both the town and college were indebted to this admirer of Hamilton's fair sex, one of whom he married.

Some two years passed and a keen-eyed observer noted that the bronze on the "American Volunteer" was beginning to peel and it soon resembled a tattered soldier at Valley Forge. A whitish substance began to show, and the citizens had the statue quietly removed.

Becoming suspicious of the real make-up of Mercury, the students noticed that their god was suffering the same fate and he was then familiarly known as the "God of the Scabby Back." Student pranks soon robbed him of his divine dignity. The first decoration was an attempt to mitigate the shamelessness of his nudity by a suit of underwear. Later he was treated to a coat of pink paint and a pail placed in his hand. Not content with such liberties, the boys took the statue one night and placed it in the front yard of the "Fem. Sem." From there a professor removed it to a cellar. This was in 1887 and our own Dean Crawshaw was one of a committee who later used the statue in celebrating the death of Livy, labelling it, "Stolen from the Sophomores."

All trace of the fake god was lost and in spite of many schemes to unearth it, for over a dozen years it reposed peacefully amid some lumber in Dr. Taylor's cellar. A clew to its whereabouts was gained through Henry W. Taylor, and he with Harry E. Fosdick, '00, and

Nelson L. Greene, '01, in the absence of "Jimmie", brought it to light one night in October, 1899. It thus became the possession of the Class of 1903, who were to keep it from '04 and hand it over to 1905. In common with all other treasures, the natural place for it was Mother Earth, so it was buried near Pecksport, but on April 27th, 1900 it was found by a laborer. However it appeared in Utica at the First Mercury Banquet and since that time the class in possession have been under obligation to hold their annual spread under its special surveillance. A few simple rules were drawn up and although revised from time to time, the spirit is the same as when first started, namely, that its possession is invaluable and its loss an irreparable disgrace.

The rules governing the possession of this ambulatory divinity provided that the class holding the statue were to retain it until they became Juniors, when they were to hand it over to the entering Freshmen, they were to hold at least one Mercury Banquet during the year at which the "bird" must be present. It was not to be hidden outside the limits of the Chenango Valley, between Earlville and Bouckville; and force was never to take the place of strategy in gaining possession of the statue. October 28th, 1899, according to the records, was the date of the First Mercury Banquet, which was held in Utica. Since then every Mercury class has had the honor of kissing the toe of their idol.

Passing over the intervening 5 years, we come to another time of great importance in the history of this college tradition, namely, its changing from the odd to the even classes. The Day of Prayer for colleges was perhaps the saddest in all Mercury history; it was the turning point of his life, and for almost ten years it has showered its favors on the even classes. It came about in this wise. The class of 1908 knew more about the coming Sophomore banquet than did some of the second-year men themselves, and so through a strategic stroke they secured possession of this beloved divinity at Binghamton. Among the many places that the "bird" has appeared at the festive boards of the Mercury classes are: Albany, Binghamton, Greene, Sidney, Syracuse, Rome and Utica. Numerous and hard-fought have been the struggles for its possession and its many narrow escapes would fill a volume. Money has never stood in the way of attempts to inveigle the saintly form back to its first love, and in its journeys over Central New York its battered form has lost much of its pristine lustre, so that the fortunate classes now possessing it can no longer kiss its godly toe, as only the head and torso remain, its

legs and arms having become dismembered in its many flights. However, it still continues to make its meteoric appearances, from time to time making its way across Whitnall Field; sometimes in a slow-moving dump wagon, sometimes in a 90 h. p. Stutz, but always eluding the traps set for it by the would-be capturers. Every known mode of transportation has been utilized in transferring the "bird" from place to place by the various classes and perhaps we may soon see it in an aeroplane."

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